



THE
CALL
OF
HONOR

WELLS



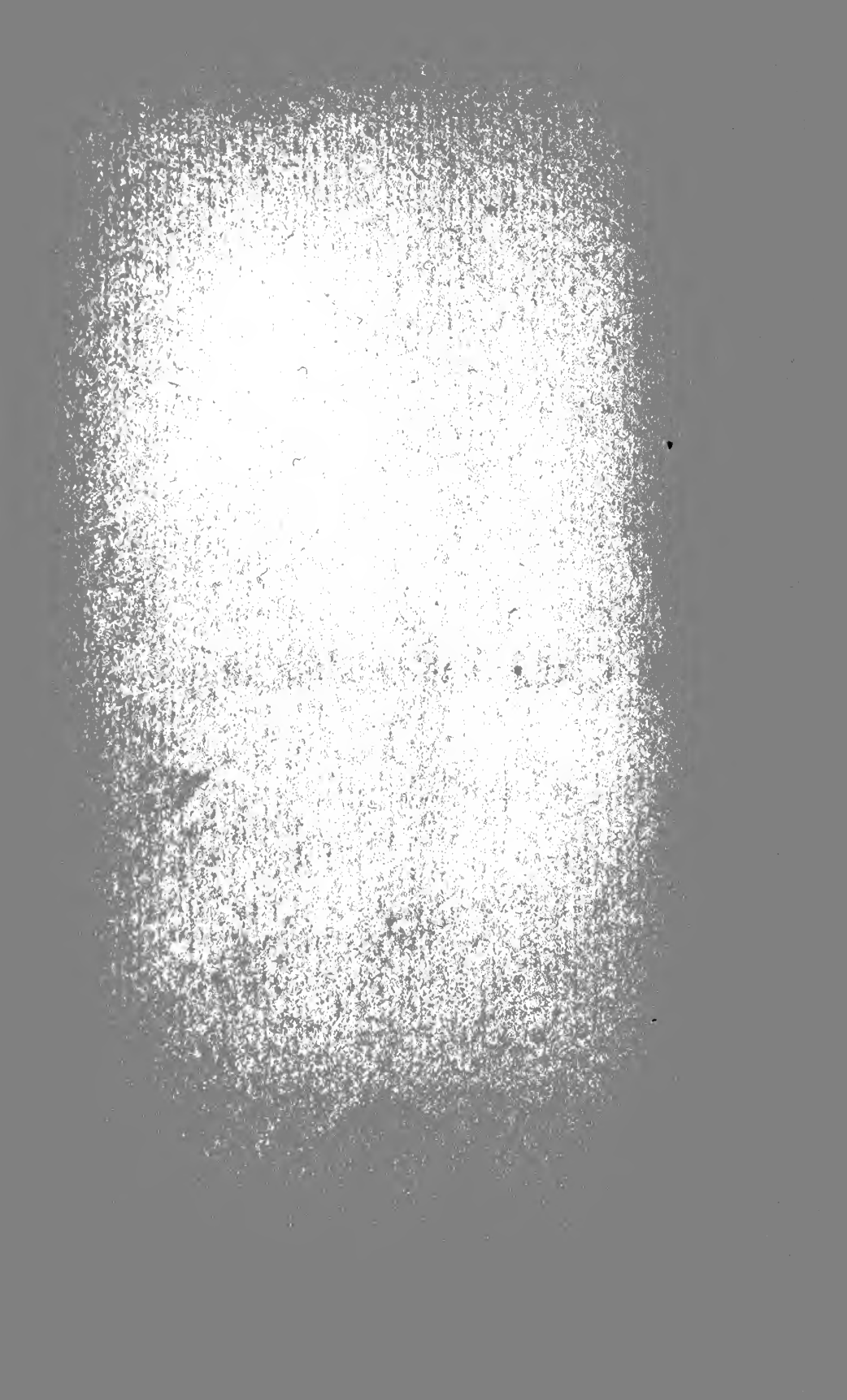
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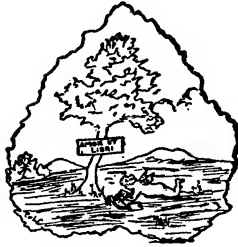
THE CALL OF HONOR



The Call of Honor

BY
PERCIVAL W. WELLS *Eysend, 21*

AUTHOR OF
THE SON OF MAN, LILIES OF THE VALLEY, THE MARTYR'S RETURN,
THE GREAT CORRECTOR, ETC.



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WANTAGH, NEW YORK
BARTLETT PUBLISHING COMPANY
1917

PS 3505
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1917

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DEC 29 1917

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no. 1.

240
A. 3. 11
7 Sept. 1921

TO
THE AMERICAN HONOR

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INTRODUCTION

After the cordial reception accorded my two recent books of poetry, *Lilies of the Valley*, and *The Son of Man*, I feel so near to the public that I do not hesitate to bring out this third volume, and hope that it, too, will be well received. There are many thoughts which can be expressed better in verse than in prose, and that is why I am using the former vehicle at this time.

While I do not pretend that my poems are perfect, I have perfected them to the best of my ability (so far as perfection goes, nothing in this human world of ours can be perfect, because of such a great variety of tastes, standards, and criteria) ; and they may be interesting and pleasing to a large number of readers.

Like Beecher, who said once that when the English Language got in his way, it would have to look out for itself, I warn all the languages that I use. We must remember that languages are means to an end, which is the expression of thought, and not ends in themselves, however much the attempt may be made by

some people to use them that way. Superficial writers I detest, and pedants I abhor, because superficiality is a cover to truth and pedantry a cover to superficiality. We should always keep our mind fixed on the end, not on the means. The end justifies the means—why not?

In this case my poetry is only a means; and I leave it to my readers to figure out the end, which will be determined by the readers, anyway.

The person who fears to express himself for dread of making a mistake or being severely criticized will never say anything. Writers as well as critics would do well to rise above trifles, like Bacon's law, which he said 'took no notice of trifles,' and I personally believe that the example of the man who wrote most of the Elizabethan literature, as Bacon surely did, is worth following.

Then there is the proverb which says that 'Trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle,' which is more or less true, especially if we interpret *trifle* as meaning *important details*. So, to get anywhere, we have to watch the details but must not allow ourselves to become lost in them. Bricks and mortar are necessary for building a brick house; but a design of

some kind is necessary, too; and when the edifice is completed it is only the fools who go around examining every little brick in order to see the house.

CANTUS POETAE

*The poet sings,
Emotionally conceiving,
Of fancied things
That have no true believing,—*

*Love thoughts that gladden,
Hopes that cheer and buoy;
Enmities that sadden,
Fears that torture and annoy;*

*Ideals within the mind,
Longings beyond human control;
The murmurs of the passing wind,
Visions of the dreaming soul!*

THE SOUL

Like a mighty wheel within an engine-room—
Noiseless, well oiled, smooth running and belt-
bound,
Turning in circles sweepingly around,—
So run the years that drag us toward the tomb,
Without an effort. Neither does the loom
Of Fate grow tired of raising from the ground
Its pitiless arms, which beckon to the mound,
Weaving Life's threads into a cloth of doom.
But oh! how beautiful that texture is
Woven by Time's deft artisans! No wear
Can injure it; the seasons can not hurt;
Nor can the sunlight cause its images
To fade, nor darkness make it seem less fair;
And tho' buried, it is never touched by dirt!

DE PROFUNDIS

Hail, O Patriotism, the Nation's friend
Whose echoing voice is heard from end to end
In this dear land established by the care
Of mighty men who labored that for e'er
AMERICA might rise and grow and be
A haven whither those oppressed might flee—
A land of honor, sympathy, and love!
Thus then the glorious pioneers strove,
With zeal divine, and raised up LIBERTY
At thy command, O God,—aided by Thee.
O Pilgrim Band, we thank you for the deed
Ye did accomplish here, and for the seed
Of Freedom ye did bravely bring and sow,
And nurture, that it could the better grow
Within the fertile bosom of our land;
And you, great patriots, whose later hand
In times of revolutionary stress
Dared beard the tyrants and demand redress,
We also thank, showing our thankfulness.
Not we established Liberty within
The western Hemisphere—no, it has been
The work of other men, who came before
And built for us the nation we adore!

But we have power to build or to destroy
What they gave us. Wildly to shout and cry
'O Patriotism!' is not enough: we need
Something besides the willingness to bleed
For America's dear sake; we have been lax—
Like men who stir not even though the axe
Of battle and of death hang o'er their head,
Like Damocles' old sword, strung by a thread!
Idly we sat, and would not heed the call
Of those who warned against a threatened thrall
By enemies whose cruel fire and sword
Was to be trusted more than their own word.
Awake, Americans! Awake! Prepare!
Be not content to rend the startled air
With patriotic cries: preserve your rights,
And fortify your liberties—he fights
Not well who allows himself to be a slave
To dangerous policies. Ye bear a grave
Responsibility, Americans—
Fellows and friends—more than shooting of guns:
Alone ye have upon your heads the weight
Of making what will be your country's Fate.

VOX PARENTIS IN BELLUM CLAMANTIS

Young men, I need you.
Come forth, O ye that are perfect
Physically, with not a blemish,
Keen-eyed, strong-limbed, and tall,
Well-weighted, vigorous, brave,
In the very flower of life:
That I may sacrifice you to the god of War,
Quickly upon his reeking altar,—
You, my flesh and blood, my children,
My darling ones,
To save my honor and protect
Against the enemies who plot against me,—
Me your sacred parent.

Come forth, I say, young men,
And take your chances in the trench
In the war that I must fight for liberty,
And earn a soldier's burial, with honor.
Your parent calls—respond to her dear voice!

THE PRICE

When we are mean,
And squeeze our dollars hard
In fear of spending them upon the nation
For purchasing an adequate protection
Against invasions and insults,
But strive to multiply
Our personal wealth
So we can buy the best of everything
For luxury and show—
Fine clothes, expensive automobiles,
Rich food, large houses, servants,
College and university degrees,
Nice summer houses, yachts,
Club fees, fine liquors, and—
Ah, then we have to give,
To stop the breach
When the enemy waxes strong,
Our very blood—our children,
Who are the dearest things we have!

THE WIND OF WAR

Hark! how the wind doth shriek
 And cleave the wintry air!
It rends the mountain peak
 And blows its chasms bare.
Oh how the wind doth shriek,
 And roar, and swirl, and tear!

Hark! how the wind doth blow
 With the blast of a dozen gales,
Whirling the driven snow
 Across the moaning vales.
Oh blow, wind, blow,
 Till stricken Nature wails!

Oh how the wind doth sweep
 Across the disturbed sea
And fill its threatened deep
 With wreck and misery!
Oh sweep, wind, sweep,
 With merciless cruelty.

Hark! how the wind doth rave,
 And drive the icy snow
Over the sad earth's grave—
 Swirling high and low.
Oh how the wind doth rave,
 And whistle, and shriek, and blow!

TO THE NEW AMERICAN ARMY

Sprung forth from the womb of thy great Nation's
need,

With joyous acclamations wast thou born
Unto America, that star of the morn.

Thou art no feeble babe fit but to plead

With broken voice; thou art no fragile reed,

But a youth with endless vigor; no child for-
lorn,

But, like the wisdom goddess roughly torn
From Jove's high brow, mature in thought and
deed.

We look upon thee now with hope enthused
As on a mighty champion of right

Who shall relieve and rescue those abused
By false injustice, shackled in the night,
Abandoned and forsook. Power thou hast
To set the warring world aright, at last!

A TOAST

Here's to the American youth—
Courageous, valiant, strong,
Lovers of justice and truth,
Righters of wrong,
Daring to die at their country's call;—
I toast the brave Americans—one and all!

EX FLAMMIS RENASCITUR

Children of France, yours is a bitter lot—
To see your fair fields ruined, having not
The power to stop the ruthless enemy
From pillaging most devastatingly:
Your hearts are bleeding, tho' your eyes be dry,
Yet why give way to grief, O Frenchmen, why?
For out of the sword and out of the fire
There comes rebirth and new desire.

Think not revenge—too terrible and great
Has been, alas, for Germany your hate!
The time has come for you, brave men, to prove
Unto the world that you can also love.
If you wish to be loved, you must begin
Yourselves the other people's hearts to win.
Heed this: the devastating fire
Is often, too, a purifier.

Fight on, brave folk, for firmly fight you must
To guard your land against the foeman's lust;
Take heart, fair France, estate most fiercely
fossed—

Thou wilt regain the cities thou hast lost.
Towers may fall, but spirits never die;
Out of the noise of battle comes the cry:
'As the Phoenix rose from out the fire,
So thou shalt have rebirth and new desire!'

THE COMPLAINT OF THE GERMAN SOLDIER

My God—a bullet through my lung!
What shall I do? Where shall I go?
It is dangerous to run—I have no force—
I will lie down here on the hot soil.
Blood! it's horrible!
I cannot breathe—I must be dying.
Sh—what was that?
A ball through the top of my head?
More blood?
Damn those Frenchmen—they shoot too well.
Elsa! Elsa! Where are you, Elsa?
Pst—what is the matter with me?
I imagined my Elsa was here.
Ha—I recall—I'm shot—
What will Elsa and the children do without
me?
For they have no one else.
I was forced to it—damn the Emperor!
Feel as if I was fainting—
Hell—I'm going to die!

BEWARE OF DESTINY

Destiny does not advance to please
The proud, the idle, or the vain.
She never placed a crown
Upon the head of any sluggish man.
She stands upon the path—
Like an avenging Fury—
To take the life of all who would abuse her.
Destiny never spares the sluggards
Or unjust men,
When once they fall into her clutches.
Thus perish all who would enjoy,
Yet sowing not,
Fame's bitter harvest.

To the conquering hero
Who has gained remarkable victories
Over oppressive enemies—
Spiritual as well as physical—
By ceaseless thought and endless toil,
Great Destiny stretches out her arms,
And sets a gleaming crown of glory
Upon his noble brow,
So that its refulgent light
Illuminates the warrior's face.
A step—and Destiny has disappeared
Within the gloom of falling night,
Leaving in peace the hero with his crown.

But, satisfied with his reward,
The victor seems content to cease from work:
He strives no more—but rests and sleeps

A sleep of Death,

From which no Fate can waken him.

The golden crown grows dull,
Falls to decay, then rots,
And crumbling disappears in Night

To follow Destiny:

The hero has become a sluggard.

Beware of Destiny!

AUX BELGIQUES

Quel pitié que vous ayez perdu, Belghiques,
Votre patrie! C'est un grand crime publique,
Un crime contre tout le monde entier
Que de mauvais Allemands ont commi. Ni vers
Ni prose ne peut bien décrire vos souffrances,
Pauvres gens! Vous avez une mauvaise chance!
Les peuples moins sympathiques ne peuvent pas
Manquer de sympathie pour vous dans ce cas,
Et nous autres Américains, vraiment sincères,
Qui n'hésitons pas de nous appeler vos frères,
Voulons vous rendre tout ce que vos ennemis
Vous ont ôté—peutêtre impossible—mais si,
Car avec le bonté de tout l'immense monde
Vous serez plus riches qu'auparavant. Les ondes
Mêmes s'agiteront joyeusement pour vous,
Cet Océan fraternel qui est entre nous.
Souhaitons, O braves Belghiques, la victoire,
La liberté, la paix, et finalement, la gloire!

THE SEA'S SONG

Deep and strong am I, the Sea,
Who roll across the bosom of the Earth.
In times of calm I am delightful,
In times of storm I'm terrible,
But in the tempests I am frightful.
I serve as a water-way for Man,
Supporting his vessels with ease,
And give him food besides;
But I take toll for all I give—
Aha! the toll of life, and ships, and treasure.
More than the Lusitania,
More than the Titanic
Have sunk beneath my waves!
I am an independent kingdom,
With peoples of my own;
Strange beings of many races,
From single cells to monstrous whales,
 All sport in me,
 And I delight in them.
Why should I not love them, my children?
Because I am bitter I am sweet,
And because I am briny I am pure:
How else could I keep from being contaminated
From the filth that Man pours into me?

I am a friend to Man
When he respects me,
But otherwise I am his enemy.

Let him beware!

Nations from time to time
Have called themselves my mistress—

Where are they now?

They perish soon

Who slander me like that,
Collapsing like the puny boats I crush.
I have no mistress.

My god is my only master:
It commands, and I obey.

THE SONG OF DEATH

When the harvest is ripe I come with a shout
And cut it down without mercy—

Wahoo! wahoo! wahoo!

(Which I holler much louder than the Valkyrie
In Wagner's noisy opera).

I love the old men because they are so old

And have mocked me so long,

Thumbing their noses at me boastfully,

Like small boys that are naughty;

I chuckle when I get a crop of old people.

The middle aged I do not care so much about,

Being neither ripe nor tender.

But oh! how nice the children are!

Infants in the womb,

At the breast,

Toddling about,

Just beginning to learn the lessons of life,

Half grown,

And coming to puberty.

They are my choicest cuttings.

And when the epidemics come along,

I swing my scythe with a merry laugh—

Wahoo! wahoo! wahoo!

I love white crepe, and black,
I love the smell of deathly medicines—
Uselessly standing on the table near the bed;
I love the wringing of tortured hands,
The cries and groans of mourners,
True tears and crocodile all mixed together,
Shaking of nerves,
And suffering—

It is for me a tonic;
I love the undertaker's oily ways,
The black and lavender coffins,
The well-draped hearse,
The pompous procession strung out for show,
And the tolling of the funeral bells;
I love the grave-diggers and the grave,
The superstitious services,
The sobbing of the living,
Whose turn will come so soon,
And the stiffness of the dead;
The mound, and the stone.
You know how cherries are at the end of the
season

After a few days' rain—
Look fine from one side, but are rotten and
wormy:
That's the condition in which I find my harvest—
Rotten, but all the same to me.

Best of them all
I love the soldiers,
Because they die in quantities.
The roaring of cannon,
The shrieking of murderous shells,
The crackling and spitting of rapid-firers,
The carnage of the battle,
The agonizing yells of dying men,
The wholesale burials,
The sickening smell of putrified corpses:—
Ah! those are the things
That make my very heart rejoice!
Wahoo! wahoo! wahoo!

WE'RE COMING, UNCLE SAM!

I

O Uncle Sam, send out the call
To ring throughout the land;
The bugle will be heard by all—
A loyal band.

To die for America's sake is glorious:
Blow loud the summons—a call to every man of
us,—
So we go marching, marching ever on!

II

We're coming, Uncle Sam, to fight,
Six million strong,
Guided by the Nation's star—
Who comes along?

With not a man a coward, and every soldier brave,
Ready to take our chances, even to the grave,
Thus we go marching, marching ever on!

TWO PICTURES

Willie Gray is a little soldier
Marching up and down his beat
With a gun upon his shoulder,
Keeping time with sturdy feet.

When he grows a little older
He'll enlist and go to war;
But then must Willie Gray be bolder
Than to run from pussy's paw.

Willie often teases Esther,
Tho' she loves him just the same
And is always his dear sister,
Never with a word of blame.

Once she owned a pretty dolly
And had named it Simple Tom;
Willie called it Esther's Folly,
And broke off its head and thumb.

He was often very trying,—
Once he hit her with his shoe;
Little Esther burst out crying,
For her arm was black and blue.

“Don’t be rude to little sister,”
Mother gently said, “my dear;
It were better you had kissed her,”
And she wiped away a tear.

* * * *

Oh, it was a fearful battle
On the Western front one day,
And the men were killed like cattle
In the carnage of the fray.

Yet the colonel did not waver
At the head of his command;
Never was a soldier braver
Than he upon that battle-land.

* * * *

All was quiet in the chamber
Where the wounded colonel lay—
It was in the cold November,
For him the parting of the way.

His noble face was pale and bloody,
As upon the battle-field;
Set, the muscles of his body
As determined not to yield.

Closely watched they then the colonel;
Harder came his panting breath.
Now the bleeding was internal,—
He was fast approaching death.

Suddenly there came a whisper
From the cot of William Gray:
“Give—my love—to—little sister!”—
And his spirit passed away.

THE COUNTRY'S CALL

Above the whirring of the wheels—

Machines that, dully grinding, rend
Both flesh and souls of men

Who, forced by circumstances, bend
To grasp gilt coins

And other things that soil—
Baser than the honest labor

At which all men should toil;

Above the deafening din of war,

Where heroes fight to win renown
And struggle madly against the foe

Only to totter, wounded, down,
And where the brave men spill their souls
(And others not so brave)

That scheming cowards and thieves at home may
gain

Because they've fought and found a grave:—

Hearken unto my message, noble youth—
I send a call for justice, love, and truth!

AN DIE DEUTSCHEN

Ach, trotz dem Krieg, das sich muss treiben heute,
Wir haben Euch sehr gut, O Deutsche Leute!
Es ist ein heil'ges Vaterland zu ehren,
Und wir, sein Söhne, müssen es ja wehren.
Vielleicht nach ein Paar Jahren ein schönes Band
Wird uns zusammen bringen Hand in Hand.
Wenn auch im Kriege unsere Männer fallen,
Gott ist mit ihnen beiden; es wird zufallen
Dass wenn der Liebefrühling wiederscheint,
Ein Friedens Jubiläum uns vereint!

STELLA FATI

We are the servants of a higher Power,
And yet we are the masters of our lives.
Touched by the waves of psychic influence
Far greater than we are able to comprehend,
We move thru curving paths of destiny,
Choosing and driven, until one end is come.
Like wanderers who see a distant gleam
Across the deepening shadows of the night
And strive to reach, with courage reassured,
The spot where shines the welcome beacon-glow,
We go thru life with stars above our head;
And if we do not find the castle walls
Within whose gates lies great Accomplishment,
It is not that we ne'er beheld the ray
Our spirit Guide flashed forth with care for us,
But that we lost our opportunities
Upon the way—blinded by selfishness
Perhaps or turned by flitting will-o'-the-wisps
Which lead poor travelers to morasses
Of superficiality and vice—
And left the light of hope burning in vain.
For every man there shines a guiding star;

And he who recognizes thru the gloom
Of human frailty a Power above
His own, and follows on with growing hope,
Will find at last a noble Destiny
Which he, with wise and earnest endeavoring
And Spiritual help, deserves and fulfills.
With Nations, it is the same. Then why should
we
Fear death, which is the great Commencement?
To it our guiding star is always leading!

TO ISLAM

What do thy Moslem hordes that once traversed
The fertile shores of Africa and Spain,
And cruelly put to death Christians coerced
By naked swords to heed Mahomet's fane?
Where is thy Crescent—emblem of thy rise
To power in East and West—Islam, thou bane
Of better life—is it upon the wane?
Is now thy curved moon fading in the skies?
Islam, thou art a conquered race. Awake
From thy long sleep, and with the world partake
Of living feasts, and join the Christian tryst!
No longer be ferocious Islam—wild
And unspeakable, but be a little child,
Eager to know the teachings of Jesus Christ.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE GERMAN SUBMARINE

Come on, ye riders of the wave,

Ye Lusitanias—

Luxuriant palaces of pleasure and service
That would frighten the eye of primitive man
And fill with terror his ancient gods—

Laden with comfortable passengers
Enjoying the undulating sea

In the midst of luxury

Bought with a little gold,

And with your precious merchandise
Worth more to Albion

(When delivered!)

Than Croesus' fortune was to Lydia;

Come on, ye merchant vessels filled with grain
And other things that hungry Ocean

Loves to swallow

To feed his bowels never satisfied;

Come on, ye superdreadnought monsters,

So proud in your treacherous might

Of useless armor and high-power guns,

Recking yourselves the conquerors of the deep,

Vanity, all vanity,—

Come on, I say, and try with me
The fortune of battle!
We are the killers of the sea,
Like cruel and merciless cetaceans
Who attack without warning or fear
The leviathans most magnitudinous
And tear them quick to death.

 This is our challenge—
 Hear ye it!

THE IMPERIAL RAT

(Inspired by Goethe)

A kaiser-cat did one time live
Down in a German cellar,
Lived high, with not a thought to give
How low was his salt-cellar—
Eye! eye! for a good digestion!
He bored him holes in the pantry wall
And nibbled on cheese till he did fall
In spasms of indigestion.
There he was caught by a doughty cat
And chewed up fine—fur, cheese and fat.
He never stole cheese after that,—
Eye! eye! for a good digestion!

DR. DEMAGOGUE

There was a sick man once who had to take
Much medicine to clean from out his system
Pneumonia. The first thing was to bake
His lungs with mustard plasters to blister 'em
As Dr. Demagogue commanded. But that
Was not enough, so the doctor got a leech
(This Demagogue had some few brains in's hat)
And clapped it mightily upon the breech
Of the burning man, to let a little blood.
The juice ran slow, so then he took a cup
And drew the precious liquid in a flood,
But only drove the patient's fever up
Full three degrees, over a hundred six.
"Ha, ha!" cried valiant Dr. Demagogue,
"I know the kind of dope that sure will fix
This fiery fellow—a strong emmenagogue—
The only cure is a heavy monthly flow!"
He did accordingly, and bled him well.
To make the story short, the man, you know,
Recovered; and Demagogue got his pay in hell.

THE CHILD'S DAY

Green, the expanse of earth,
Blue, the vaulted sky;
Merry, the children's mirth—
For what have they to sigh?

Gloomy, the end of day,
Sombre, the coming night;
No sound of laughter gay—
No child is there in sight.

Tucked in their downy beds,
The little fairies sleep;
And peaceful lie their heads
In slumber soft and deep.

They have entered Dreamland's door,
Protected by God's breath;
And how little they dream of War,
Bullets, Battles, Death!

A PRAYER OF THE NATION

O God, of Whom we are a part,
Guild Thou our mind and bend our heart;
Teach us to do, that we may know
Thy heavenly favors as they flow.

We are but weaklings, Thou are great;
Thou mad'st our frame, Thou seest our fate.
A day is ours—eternal, Thou,
Before Whose edicts we must bow.

We are but spirits held in dust,
With thoughts impelled by human lust.
Grant us this prayer: Guide our feet
Until we reach Thy mercy-seat;

When we are right, oh may we win,
And gain our battles without sin!
Be near unto our Nation, Lord,
And guard it with Thy holy Word.

LE VIEUX PROBLEME

How can one serve his country best?
By following a weak-kneed governor,
 Supporting foolish acts,
And giving approval to shambling policies
That bring upon a nation shame?
Or can one serve it best by honest criticism,
 And finding open fault,
 When necessary,
 With those great men
Entrusted with the reins of government?
Or should the people all, like dogs,
 Be muzzled
To keep them from criticizing
 And demanding due reform?
For choking people, there's nothing like
 A little Imperialism.
Of course this does not refer
To the United States of America—
That wonderful land of ideal liberty,
Where no brave man was ever imprisoned
 For speaking the truth.

A VOICE FROM THE TRENCH

In the days of the older conquerors—
The Grecian Alexander, the Cæsars,
Genghis Khan, Tamerlaine, Napoleon—

They had nothing like me.

I am a modern invention,
Born, like many others,

From dire necessity,

My mother;

And William the Kaiser sired me.

The Cretan Labyrinth

Was nothing compared with me.

I clasp close to my bosom

The sturdy young soldiers

Who visit me,

And very few escape.

Why should I let them go?

They are mine! mine!

Insatiably I demand

Great sacrificial holocausts,

On which I feed.

I scorn to take my victims

One at a time,

Like Moloch, Baal, the Cyclops, Thlen,
But more like the Aztec deities
I devour them by the thousand,
Although they come to me for protection,
Turning their weapons against themselves.

I work scientifically,
According to modern demands,
And do not hesitate to sing the boast
That I have become an expert
In managing my holocausts!

LE FORGERON AMOUR

*(Found, after the battle of the Marne, on the dead
body of Henri Hugo.)*

Il est un forgeron d'amour, qui forge
Les chaînes d'ivoire et d'or sur mon cœur;
Ces bandes restent sous ma pleine gorge
Tout aisément comme au printemps des fleurs.
Salut au fort et bon Amour!

L'Amour, avec ses espérances belles,
Qui auront quelque jour beaucoup de fruit,
A joint mon cœur avec le cœur de celle
Que j'aime, grâce à l'Amour— aimez-lui!
Vive le forgeron Amour!

THE SONG OF THE AEROPLANE

More powerful than the fabled rocs
That were believed to carry off in their talons,
As easily as eagles fly away with lambs,
The largest elephants and hippopotami
To feed their hungry nestlings,—
Am I, the great man-bird machine,
 The latest engine of war.
With wings outstretched I rise and soar
 Above the very clouds
 And into the azure heavens
That for so many centuries—nay, æons—
 Defied the human race.
I conquer the air—I conquer space,
And with my cannon and my bombs
I help to conquer the enemy.
Although I overcome the element
With my great wings and strong propellers,
I am still a servant to the will of man.

THE LOVE POEM OF KARL MEIER

(Killed at St. Quentin)

Mein Schatz ist wie ein Diamant,
Ein schöner, treuer Stein.
Ich nahm sie fröhlich bei der Hand—
Sie glänzt' mit Pracht wie Sonnenschein.

Mein Schatz ist arm, auch gut und rein,
Und liebt mich ach so sehr!
Sie wohnt in Braubach an dem Rhein,
Und wartet bis ich wiederkehr'.

Du schöne Martha, könnt' ich leben
So dass ich wiederkehr'!
Bald muss ich doch mein Leibchen geben,
Für meines Deutschlands Ehr'.

THE HAND GRENADE

They thought me out of date,
But recently I have proved
That I am very much alive
And full of modern deviltry.
If I am not up with the times,
Pray tell me, what is?

I look harmless enough
When I am not in action,
And few who had not seen me work
Would realize what a lump of terror
I really am!

I have two temperaments:

One, the phlegmatic,
Like what the English are supposed to be,
Calm, deliberate, quiet, cool, and dull;
The other, more like Satan's—
Bursting with rebellious energy,
Touchy, excitable, dangerous,
Like a whole volcano of fiery passion
Compressed beyond the limit,
Confusing, with destructive violence,
A bit of Cosmos—Man and his mother Earth—
Back to old Chaos' twisted wreck.

SEND ME A KISS

(From James Robinson, a private in the trenches, to his girl in Battle Creek.)

Send me a kiss if you dare, miss,
From your red lips so sweet,
And seal the letter with care, miss,
With loving lips, I entreat.

Send me a kiss, O fair miss,—
Your father will never surmise;
Don't tell your sis' the affair, miss,
So who will ever be wise?

Please send me a kiss if you care, miss,
Perfumed with Love's own scent;
I love you—but beware, miss,
That kiss, it must be sent!

PRIVATE ALBERT DEWEY

(In a French Hospital)

Dear nurse, do you not love to look
At my sweetheart's photograph?
Beside my country whom I serve,
She's the only one I have.

Speak to me of her love—
The dearest thing I prize;
Tell of her beautiful hair
And of her glowing eyes.

Tell of her merry smiles,
Her rippling laughter gay,
Her mirth that pain beguiles
And sends suffering away.

Say that her heart is large—
A home for tenderness,
Throbbing with wonderful love
And generous impulses.

Write her that I am brave
Because of her love for me.
Dear nurse, do you not also love
My girl across the sea?

THE SONG OF THE CANNON

I roar defiance at the enemy,
Belching out flame and smoke
 From my awful orifice—
That gaping, toothless muzzle
Which shoots forth living destructiveness.

 My boys—I love them
With a sort of inhuman love—
 Feed me at the breech
With the very essence of hell,
Damnable (to the enemy I hate!)
Forces of overthrow and ruin
When well directed and pointed true.
They call me their mistress of war,

 And I love the title
As well as the tokens of love they give me.
My love for them is faithful to the death.

 Death is my specialty:
My dowry, my wedding-ring, my maiden-head,—
 All signify death!

I hate the enemy
With every fiber of my being,
And do my best to annihilate them;

But when by evil chance
I fall into their hands,
As sometimes happens,
I turn against my former friends—
Forced to it, like a false mistress—
And shatter them with high explosives
 According to my captors' will.
Oh, put no trust in me, ye sons of men,
But still ye had better heed my voice!
I speak—not words of truth—
 But terrible words of war.
How many million enemy boys
I have forced to dance
 The dance of death!

CORPORAL JOHN HONNEST

When first the call to the colors came,
I lost my color,
And wanted to run and hide.
I am honest about it,
And tell you the truth,
Different from lots of 'em,
Who found some fine excuse
To conceal their cowardice
And posed as patriots!
Sometimes I don't believe it pays
To be honest in this world,
And yet I know that honest men
Get their reward—there if not here,
But possibly here and there.
Call me a coward if you will—
What's in a name?
There are many who urge,
But do not go themselves
For some good reason of their own:
I never would send a substitute
To cover *my* cowardice.
What is a brave man, anyway?

KÜSSE MÄDCHEN

(Sent by Lieutenant Heinrich Heine to his sweetheart in Basel, but captured on the way and never delivered.)

Küsse Mädchen auf die Wang',
Morgen ist nicht heut;
Küsse, aber sei nicht bang,
Flüchtig ist die Zeit.

Leb' die Liebe! Sieh, es ist
Heut Gelegenheit.
Weisst du wen du morgen küsst?
Flüchtig ist die Zeit.

Aufschub eines guten Kuss'
Hat schon oft gereut.
Fröhlich doch man lieben muss—
Flüchtig ist die Zeit!

THE LOVE POEM OF THE CYNICAL GERMAN SOLDIER, HANS ACKER

Es klopft' ein Mädchen an mein Herz;

Ich hörte sie zu schnell.

Ich floh zu ihr—sie sagt, "Ein Scherz—

Dein Herz ist ganz zu hell."

Das Fräulein kam zuletzt zu mir,

Sehr traurig sah sie aus.

Ich sagte ihr, "Du bist ein Tier,"

Und trieb sie fort hinaus.

JACK SARGENT'S LAST SONNET

Above, a deadly shower of splintering steel,
Driven down upon us with man-killing fury,
Biting revengefully through our caps to feel
The softness of our brains; beside us, gory
And mangled shapes—once forms of living men
That felt, and loved, and breathed like us, the
air,
But now all shattered, fearfully still; and then
In front, behind, and all around the sair
Screaming of dying men and screeching of shells
That strike and burst like an avalanche of hells.
The cannonading ceases—what a relief!
Hark! the command to drive the enemy—
No rest for tortured nerves—'twas vain belief:
A minute more to live—God pity me!

THE RECRUIT'S MOTHER

Her eyes were red with weeping
As she stood at the cabin door
And waved goodby to her only son,
Whom she might see no more.

Hers was a widow's lot—
As twenty years before
Her husband had bravely marched away
To the Spanish American War;

But he had never returned,—
They sent to her instead
A letter of hers they found at his breast,
Dyed dark with martyr's red.

Her father had gone to the Civil War
To battle for Union's cause,
And two of her brothers left with him
'Mid wild applause,

Applause of those who could not go
Yet did their part at home
To keep their country's honor bright,
Enduring whatever come.

She never saw her father again—
He died at Gettysburg;
And her brothers were buried in heroes' graves
At Fredericksburg.

So now she stood and choked her sobs
As she waved at her only son;
And she blessed the cause of the Blue-and-Gray—
A true American!

HER SOLDIER BOY

She's sighing for her soldier boy,
Who went away to school
And writes to her but once a day—
How could he be so cruel?

She sits upon the porch, and smiles
When any one goes by;
But when she goes to bed at night
She lays her down to cry.

O soldier boy, sweet soldier boy,
Why do you not come back
To see your love, your lonely love,
Who dies upon the rack?

Lay down your gun, your shining sword,
Nay, take your arms with you,
And quickly come to tell your girl
That you will e'er be true.

AN AMERICAN MIDSHIPMAN'S LOVE POEM

One heart was lost to me,
Alas! but then
I launched upon the sea
Of love again.

And so thy heart I found,
Faithful and true,
Steering where I was bound,
Out on the blue.

Let the shells burst and roar,
I have no fear;
Of death I think no more—
Only thee, dear.

Fearless of foe or wind,
Braving the sea,
I shall return to find
My true love—thee.

THE MIDSHIPMAN'S SECOND POEM

I miss you, dear, the whole day long,
Yet have you in my heart,
And often hear the wondrous song
You sang e'er we did part:

"Come soon again,"—the words you sighed
With tears I could not see,
"And heal the wound within my side—
Come soon, love, back to me!"

I love you, Nell, the whole night long,
And keep you in my breast,
And oft repeat the beautiful song
I love to hear the best:

"Come soon again,"—the words you sighed
With tears I could not see,
"And take the pain within my side
Away, dear love, from me;

"Don't leave me long, my sweetest joy,
I can not live alone:
My love for you, my own dear boy,
Is a secret I must own!"

TO THE RUSSIANS

Let us, O brothers, tho across the seas
Join hands, for we are both democracies.
We feel the same, and have the same desires;
In all our veins there run the sparkling fires
Of freedom's inspiration. We are free
From despotism and cruel tyranny,
Devoted to the cause of liberty;
We understand each other well, and see
Into each other's heart: so we are friends,
With mutual interests and common ends.

MATER DOLOROSA

(*A une Mère Française*)

O Mater Dolorosa! Dieu bénisse
Ton coeur sanglant—mais toujours magnanime—
Même si tu, mère, ice-bas ne puisses
Voir autour de toi tes enfants, l'abîme
Dans ton esprit (comme un lis qu'il fleurisse!)
Dans l'âme, c'est un sentiment sublime!

O Mater Dolorosa! quel espoir
Tu devrais ice-bas encore avoir
Que dans le ciel tes enfants relevés
Par Dieu du creux vacant et morne et noir
Guérissent les plaies du coeur crevé—
Et qu' ils soient un jour tous retrouvés.

O Mater Dolorosa! cesse donc
De pleurer si tristement; Mater, cesse
De s'affliger auprès du vain cerceuil,
Car comme le lierre monte au tronc
D'un noble arbre, ainsi l'âme vivant presse
Son essor vers le bon Dieu, loin du deuil!

ARTHUR CLAY'S FAREWELL

I'm going to the war, sweetheart,
And I've come to say goodbye;
You know I love you, and always will—
Be happy—there, don't cry!

When I come back to you, sweetheart,
It won't be long, dear, no,
We'll furnish a little house and then
To the minister we'll go!

Oh yes, I'll write 'most every day,
And you will too, won't you?
You must not cry, dear girl.—I say,
Of course I will be true.

I told you twice I loved you—
What good is it to cry?
Give me another kiss,—
Goodby, dear girl, goodbye!

THE DEATH SONG OF SIR ROGER

I am a traitor, and I confess it:

Against my country I conspired.

They caught me and tried me,

And sentenced me to die.

Why should they not?

What else could they have done?

But protests and petitions

Are sent in every day

By crazy, sentimental people

Who want to interfere

With the course of justice.

They do but weary me—

And put on treason a premium.

I wish that they would mind their business,

And let me hang in peace.

(Translated from a Greek Ms. found at Scutari)

The Turkish army went to war
By orders from the Wizir,
Shouting its battle-cry near and far—
“Hurrah! Oh hock der Kaiser!”

It was the Germans of high rank,
With Will the Sultan’s adviser,
That trained the soldiers, but how rank
Their lessons—“Hock der Kaiser!”

The Turks stood up and shouted well
(Too bad they were not wiser)
For German discipline and Will—
Ha, Willie,—“Hock der Kaiser!”

FLY ON, FOREVER!

Fly on, forever, noble Flag,
Blown by a favoring breeze,
And wave thy stars above the land,
Thine anchor o'er the seas.

Protect thy sons, majestic Flag;
Preserve their liberty:
Thy glorious Stars and Stripes were born
To make all people free.

Then fly forever, noble Flag,
And honor every breeze;
Maintain thy people safe in war,
And keep them wise in peace.

CHAINS

We forge with thoughts and actions of today
The hardened links of Future's heavy chain,
Thru which no file of will can wear its way
Or wish can cut in spite of growing pain.
The present moments merge into the past,
And never may we call them back again;
They come and go like winds before the mast—
Like rays of light—like drops of falling rain.

We forge today the fetters of our lives,
With Vulcan blows upon the anvil Fate,
Made of cold steel that mocks at tempered knives,
Since now it is too late—oh all too late—
To do their shearing, for the chain is cold,
And now the edge of will which erstwhile ate
Thru softer metal, keen and sharp and bold,
Is old and rusty, ancient, out of date.

Hark! how they rattle and shake with clink and
clank—

Those dreadful chains of selfish servitude!
They sound of darkened prisons dread and dank,
Of harsh imprisonment by jailors rude;
They sound of prisoners linked rank by rank
That know no joy nor anything of good
But tread in mire and sleep on a dirty bank
And by the germs of Death are close pursued.

With thoughts and deeds we forge our fetters
now,

And fasten them with blows of sledges, tight,
While yet the yielding spirit will allow.

Tomorrow in the cells of blackest night
We may be chained—alas! knowing not how

Or why the cruel, pinching gyves were wound
About our hands and necks, and ruined bow
Beneath the weight, with shameful fetters
bound.

We forge today the shackles for our feet,
And each step marks the path of future ways.
Each thought we think we must henceforth re-
peat.

If now we drop our heads and let our face
Turn selfward, soon the sun will be too strong
For darkened eyes; our minds will thus grow
base.

Why not fashion our fetters with a song
From generous hearts, planning for future
days?

When men and nations come to blows, they oft
Forget the altruistic impulses,
Fearing perhaps to be considered soft
And feeling wrath a-running thru their pulses.

How soon can they bind all around their hearts
Fetters of cruelty and selfish chains
Which get more tight each day, as Circe's arts
Bind hoggish men with wire that chokes
and stains!

Like great trees fastened near the running streams
Of water ever pure and fresh and sweet,
With roots well nourished and with all their
limbs

Adorned with vigorous leaves that love to greet
The passers-by with beauty and with shade
To give them happiness and shelter there,—
So we if bound by love can raise our head
And, freed from self, make Man's whole Future fair.

CONSOLATION

What is Time? a mortal minute
Measured by the hand of man,
Cut from out the whirling circle
Of the earth's enormous span?

Hark! a whispering echo answers:
"Time is nought but change, decay,
When the art of man discovers
Measures for the fleeting day;

"When he reckons by a life-time,
Then is day no more than death:
For the pointing finger withers
E'er departs the flickering breath."

Shall we live by wretched seconds,
Never looking at the sky?
Never know that, like the heavens,
We roll on eternally?

Graves hide but our earthly bodies
Laid away beneath the sod;
But our souls go on for ever,—
One with Nature, part of God.

MARY ROBINE

A PLAY

MARY ROBINE

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Mr. Saintly, *a minister.*

Mrs. Robine, *a widow.*

Mary Robine, *her daughter.*

Robert Held, *Mary's lover.*

Mrs. McCarthy, *a poor widow.*

Johnnie McCarthy, *her son.*

Mr. Wood, *the postman.*

Mabelle, *maid at the Robines' house.*

The scene is Manahatton, Illinois, U. S. A.

ACT I

Scene I

A sitting-room or parlor in Mrs. Robine's house, well but not luxuriantly furnished. In the center of the room, on an art-square rug, is a library table with books, magazines, and a gas drop-light with green glass shade upon it. There is a bookcase against the wall at the back, and an upright mahogany piano at the right. Doors at left and right, by the corners.

Mr. Saintly and Mrs. Robine (*Sitting near each other by the table in rocking-chairs.*)

Mrs. Robine (*Dressed attractively in widow's weeds, and looking quite young for a woman of forty. Leans forward toward Mr. Saintly as she speaks.*) Dear Mr. Saintly, must people always
fight

And kill each other in war? It doesn't seem right.

Mr. Saintly. It doesn't *seem* right, no; but who
can say

It's either right or wrong when it is God's way
Of waking man from lethargy which kills
More surely than bullets? What God Almighty
wills

Never does harm to man. If we trust not
In God, whom can we trust? A helper is God—
He knows our weaknesses and too our needs;
And tho we comprehend it not, he bleeds
With us when we are hurt, for we are part
Of Him, and have His Spirit in our heart;
But He does suffer more when we are bad,
And all our wickedness must make Him sad—
Such sadness is worse than pain!

Mrs. R. (*Touching him earnestly on the knee.*)

What wickedness

Do you mean?

Mr. S. Why, greed and avariciousness,
Commercial cruelty, land-grabbing, pride,
Living for self and denying God beside,
Avoiding one's duties, political foxiness,
Fooling the people with motives of covetousness,
Concealing the truth for selfish ends, and—well,
Why speak of more?

(*Enter Maid*)

Mrs. R. Come later, please, Mabelle.

(*Exit Maid.*)

Oh do go on! (*Edging up to him so that her knee touches his. He frowns and draws away a little.*)

Mr. S. You know perhaps that lust
Is wicked, for God has told us that we must
Not dwell upon the flesh. Man makes a beast
Of himself—if he's not one already. The least
That we can do is keep us pure in thought,
Ennobling thus the bodies God has wrought
With wonderful design.

Mrs. R. (*Anxiously.*) But when we *love*?

Mr. S. Ah, that is diff'rent! God uses love to
move

His creatures into higher planes of life.
It is not lust when a pure man loves his wife,
Or when a woman truly loves a man.

Mrs. R. (*Sighs, relieved, and sits back, and gazes at Mr. S. admiringly.*)

You talk so wonderfully! And then you can
Explain so well, Mr. Saintly.

Mr. S. Thank you, I do

But say what I am firmly convinced is true.

Mrs. R. You know so much! tell me, are men
a little

Lower than angels?

Mr. S. I do not want to belittle

The human race, but man has hardly yet
Emerged from beasthood! Alas, he still is set,
Like a slave, in bondage to animal passions. He
Has not yet tasted spiritual liberty:

He has not reached by any means that stage
Where he can love his brother. It is an age
Of mercenary conquest, enmity
Aroused by many passions, jealousy
And hate, hypocrisy and cunning.

Mrs. R. Oh!

Mr. S. Tho we like not to think it, yet 'tis so.
The truth is truth; and who can say it best
If not a minister? I do not trust
Most men and women—

Mrs. R. Oh!

Mr. S. They are not able
To see the truth, hence are not capable
Of telling it; they can not analyse
Their own or others' natures: so to them lies

Are tangled up with truth. Some do not see,
And can not understand; while others flee
From truth because it does not flatter them.

Mrs. R. (*Affecting astonishment*) Can that be so?

Mr. S. Madam, it is. Ahem!
(*He moves a little away from her as she moves up very close to him*)

Mrs. R. And do you think so little of our sex?

Mr. S. I respect both sexes.

Mrs. R. (*Edging up to him again*) You are not married!

Mr. S. That makes
No difference. (*Looking down at her hand, which she has put, apparently not realizing it, close to his knee*) One may love a diamond,
And yet not purchase one.

(*The door opens, and Mr. Saintly rises quickly and begins to walk up and down. Enter Maid.*)

Maid. Mis' Bigby phoned,
That she can't come on Thursday, Mis' Robine,
But she will try to come some other time.

Mrs. R. Thank you, Mabelle. (*Waves her out. Agitated*)

I wish we did not have
To spend such time on dress!

Mr. S. Madam, I crave
Your pardon—women love to fuss with dress—
It's part of their superficial life—yes,
Almost the greatest part, I do contend.
They love to make new gowns, but not to mend.
From morn to noon, from noon to dusky eve
They ponder o'er their clothes, and slyly weave
Within their heads a thousand expensive gar-
ments;

They possess great fancies, but very little sense!
(He stops to look at a picture on the piano.)

Mrs. R. (*Looking at him admiringly*) Now one would think you were a woman-hater, Mr. Saintly!

Mr. S. (*Turning his head nonchalantly.*)

Well, I am no satyr.

I would not chase a woman very far:
I care not for the ugly, and fear the fair.

Mrs. R. You seem to know our very nature,
tho;

Not many men can read the women so!
You must observe acutely.

Mr. S. Yes, I do,
For I am anxious to learn whate'er is true.
This is your husband, I presume—is it not?

(Holding up the photograph.)

Mrs. R. (*Mopping her eyes gently.*)

Yes, that is Harry. You knew that he was shot
By cowardly guerillas in Mexico—

Carranza's men—about three years ago?

Mr. S. (*Walks over to her and places a hand
on her shoulder.*)

I heard it, Madam. Altho I have been here
In Manahatton less than a single year,
I know of all the village peoples' lives—
The troubles of parents and children, husbands
and wives.

I do not mention everything I know.

I sympathise with you in your great woe:

The bereavement must have come upon you hard!

Three years is not so long a time—

Mrs. R. (*Looking up at Mr. Saintly appeal-
ingly.*)

I dared
Not mention it before—do you think it right
For me to marry again, Mr. Saintly, quite
So soon? Do you believe in a second marriage?

Mr. S. It depends on the circumstances. At
your age,

And if you love a second time, why not?

Mrs. R. (*Sighing in a relieved way.*)

My dear Mr. Saintly, that's just what I have thot,
But my daughter Mary—

Mr. S. (*Starts, then bites his lip.*) Ah yes,
your daughter Mary—

Mrs. R. Does not approve of it. She says it's
very

Wicked. I can not change her mind. She is
So set! I do not like hostilities

Within the family, hence do not speak
To her of the subject. You do not think it weak
Of a woman, then, to love another man
When her first husband is dead?

Mr. S. I really can
Not see any harm in it, if there is love
On both sides. You should ask of God above,
However, my dear woman, for it is He
That should decide that question, and not me!
You spoke of Mary—she is a lovely girl—
Beautiful—fair as an oriental pearl!
She seems to be thotful, gentle, loving, kind.
Does her father's demise prey upon her mind?

Mrs. R. Listen—I heard her voice—she's com-
ing now—

(*Mr. S. drops quickly into his chair again, and
moves it farther away from Mrs. R.'s.*)

Won't you remain with us for supper?

Mr. S. (*Who was not listening attentively to
her.*)

How?

Mrs. R. Can you not stay with us to tea?

Mr. S. (*Beams at her happily.*) Why yes,
I shall be delighted to, I must confess.

Scene 2

Mr. Saintly, Mrs. Robine, (*Enter*) Mary.

Mary (*Exuberantly, going over at once to
shake hands with Mr. S., who has risen.*)

How do you do, Mr. Saintly!

Mr. S. How are you, Mary?

Mary. Quite well, I thank you.

Mr. S. (*Still holding her hand, which Mary
does not try to pull away.*) You seem to be
as cheery

And happy as ever. (*Sits.*) I'm glad of it. Why
should

Young people not be well and happy? God
would

Not have it otherwise.

Mrs. R. The Reverend
Is going to stay to tea.

Mary. And can't you spend
The evening with us, too?

Mr. S. I shall be charmed
To stay a while; but I must be forearmed
(*Jokingly*) Against your beauty, ladies, for I
might fall

In love with both of you!

(They all laugh pleasantly, and Mrs. R. seems to enjoy the compliment greatly.)

Mrs. R. If that is all,
We do not mind. And Mr. Saintly, you
Must make yourself at home. We're only two,
And often we get lonely—especially
Since Harry died. So when occasionally
A sympathetic friend can eat with us,
It brightens our life and makes it more joyous.

Mr. S. Thank you! That is a very nice compliment.

I remember with greatest pleasure the evening I
spent
With you before.

Mrs. R. (*After a pause.*) Mary, what's on your mind?

Not worrying again, I hope?

Mary. I find

That soon there'll be another draft.

Mr. S. and Mrs. R. (*Together.*) Another!

Mary. That's what the evening paper says,
dear mother.

Mr. S. I am surprised. It's hard on the young men.

What else, however, can be expected when
We are engaged with such a powerful
And warlike enemy. I hope it will

Be over soon—but no one knows how long
The war will last.

(Another pause, during which they all look sad, and Mrs. R. uses her handkerchief.)

Mrs. R. Won't you please sing that song
That you were singing this afternoon, dear Mary?

Mary. *(Almost sharply.)* I don't believe I can.

Mrs. R. *(Waving toward the piano impatiently.)*

Don't be contrary.

(Mary goes to the piano unwillingly, and sings, playing her own accompaniment, The Rosary, in a sad but beautiful voice. When she has finished she stifles a sob in her handkerchief and flees from the room without a word. Her mother and the pastor exchange astonished glances.)

Enter Maid.

Maid. Supper is ready now, Mis' Robine.

Mrs. R. We

Will be right in, Mabelle. Set places for three.

(Exit maid)

Scene 3.

(Combination kitchen and dining-room in Widow McCarthy's house, furnished with a small range on which are a tea-kettle and a coffee-pot, a cheap table in the middle of the room on which are the remains of a scanty meal, to the

(Johnnie gets the lime for her. She stops to hug and kiss him.)

Johnnie. Hurrah! Won't that be fine! When I get thru

The dishes, ma, I'll help you with the clo'es.

W. Mc. Ye're a dare little brat, ahem! th' good Lord knows!

How loike yez daddy, too! He wuz allus waitin' On me aroun' th' house ter hilp. An' soitin Sure yez goin' ter be loike him. Oi know it.

(She wipes her nose into the wash tub with her finger and thumb, and goes on washing.)

Now here's a rip in th' shate—Oi'll have t' sew it. Oi belave thot's why Mis' Robine gives me her clo'es

Ter wash—becase I does it noice an' sews Th' rips. Johnnie, ye'll foind it allus pays Ter do thin's good—der' aint no ither ways, Nohow, whin ye'z a widder 'ooman.

Johnnie. I never

Expect to be a widow, ma.

W. Mc. *(Laughing uproariously.)* Did y'iver Hear annythin' loike thot? Now didn't Oi say Ye'd be a man loike yez fayther some foine day? Sure, he wuz allus jokin'.

(Here Johnnie while listening to her grows careless and drops a dish, which smashes.)

An' he wud break
Th' dishes, too, but phwat diff'rence wud it make?
Oi'll say it av yer dad—he did provide
Forr me. Don't worry, lad, dere's more insoide.
It's a lucky 'ooman gits a man as good
As he. Did yez hear how th' widder Robine wud
Be marryin' agin?

Johnnie.

I didn't hear.

Who told you, ma?

W. Mc. Go on! now didn't Oi see 'er
Mesilf out on the porch wid Mr. Mc. Saint?
He may be a parrsin, but thot don't make 'im a
saint.

Johnnie (*Snickering.*) Oh, you mean Mr.

Saintly, ma? Why he

Is their minister!

W. Mc.

An' didn't Mabelle see

Thim hug 'ach ither in th' room? Go on!

(*A pause, during which she washes furiously,
and Johnnie wipes the dishes noisily.*)

I wish her will, an' th' parrsin, too. He gave
Me fifteen dollars lasht wake—more'n I cud save
In a month o' Sundays.

Johnnie (*Staring at her with his mouth wide
open.*)

Fifteen dollars, ma!

And where'd he get it?

W. Mc.

Where'd he git it? La!

Don't ask sech foolish quistions. His congrregation

Gave it fer me becasse I'm poor. Th' nation
Aint got no better man dan Mr. Mc Saint.

Johnnie. You're right on that, mama, I bet it
haint!

W. Mc. Now hilp me hang th' clo'es out, Johnnie. Come!

(She looks around the room.) We aint got much,
but t'ank th' Lorr'd, it's home.

(She takes up her basket with the clothes she has wrung out with her hands and goes out into the yard with Johnnie.)

Exeunt.

ACT II

Scene I

(The Robines' sitting-room in the evening.)

Mary *(dressed beautifully but simply in a white dress with short sleeves, pale but happy)*, and Robert Held *(sitting across the table from her, on the side nearest the audience.)*

Robert. You look lovely tonight, Mary.

Mary. *(Blushing and smiling.)* Do I?

Do you mean that as a compliment?

R. *(Embarrassed.)*

Well, why—

Why not?

M. I thought you emphasized *tonight*
As if—(*hesitates.*)

R. I see! how can I make it right?
Well now, you're lovely all the time, Mary,
But somehow tonight you look so very, very
Beautiful! How's that? a little better?

(*They glance in each other's eyes lovingly and
laugh gaily, enjoying the joke.*)

M. You're teasing me, I think.

R. Not a single letter
Of *tease* in me, Mary—I'm too direct.
I suppose you women like some teasing?

M. Correct!
Go up to the head of your class, Robert.

R. (*Looking around the room.*) But I'm
The only one in my class.

M. (*Meaningly.*) Don't be, this time,
too sure of that.

R. (*Startled and faltering.*) Mary, what do
you mean?

M. (*Coyly.*) Am I not also in the class?

R. (*With a forced smile.*) I clean
Forgot about you!

M. (*Puzzled, speaking coquettishly.*) Well,
I'm right here. (*Puts her arm on the table.*)

R. I guess
You're not much used to teasing, Mary. Yes,

You're here, and I am here; but I won't be
Here long, perhaps.

M. (*Clutching the arm of her chair with one
hand and a magazine on the table with the
other.*)

You mean?

R. (*Excitedly.*) The German War!
They'll call me sure—my duty calls—and for
My country I will gladly go—to die,
If necessary! (*He seizes her hand passionately,
leans over and kisses it.*) Why, Mary, what's
in your eye?

M. (*Withdrawing her hand from his and wip-
ing one eye after the other.*) I'm afraid the
light isn't burning very well.
(*She pretends to make the flame burn higher, but
instead turns it lower.*)

R. (*Gets up quickly and comes around to her,
and taking both her hands in his, kneels in
front of her.*) I love you, Mary! For you I'd
go thru Hell!

M. Oh no! oh no! not there, please, Robert
dear!

I'd rather you would stay with us—right here.

R. You love me, then? (*Kisses her hands
again and again.*)

M. I haven't had time to think.

R. Give me some hope! I'd stand to be shot
or sink

To the bottom of the sea with happiness
Dear Mary, if you will only answer, Yes.

M. (*Smiling seriously.*) Don't think of dying,
Robert—I want you to live.

R. But do you love me, Mary? You must give
Me an answer. Do I not have a right to know?
Because—oh pshaw, because I love you so!

(*He rises and attempts to kiss her on the lips.
She resists half-heartedly at first, then yields.
He crushes her to him, and for a while there is
silence.*)

M. (*Trying vainly to push him away.*) Oh
don't, Rob! Stop!

I hear my mother's steps.

(*The door opens just as Robert turns up the
light.*)

Scene 2

Enter Mrs. Robine.

Mrs. R. (*Intuitively sizing up the situation.*)

I hope I am not intruding—

R. (*In a stage whisper aside.*) What sweet lips!

M. (*Resignedly.*) Oh, not at all!

Mrs. R. (*Sitting down comfortably in Robert's
chair, which he gallantly offers to her.*)

Thank you, Mr. Held.

M. Call him Robert, mother.

Mrs. R. (*Reproachfully.*) Why, I called Harry Mr. Robine long after we were married, dear; and Robert does not mind, I'm sure. He rather likes it, as you see.

R. I don't object—in fact, I find it very agreeable.

(*There follows an awkward silence.*)

Mrs. R. (*Ogling.*) Mr. Held, do you sing?

R. (*After a cough.*) Oh yes, Mrs. Robine, I sing like anything!

(*They all laugh.*)

(*To Mary, lovingly.*) Will you not sing for me?

M. (*Rising cheerfully and going to the piano.*)
Which one?

R. Oh, any,
Whatever you like—I know you can sing many.

M. (*Looking over several pieces.*)

How about 'A Dream' by Bartlett?

R. & Mrs. R. (*Together.*) Fine!

(*Mary sings and plays. Her mother is greatly moved, and weeps.*)

Mrs. R. I feel
So bad! It makes me think of Harry—so real!

M. (*Turning about solicitously on the stool.*)

Hadn't you better go to bed, dear mother,
If you feel bad?

R. (*Aside, with delight.*) That's good!

Mrs. R. No, play another,
Dear, and I'll feel better.

R. (*Aside, disappointed.*) But I won't, tho!

M. I'll play the 'Spring Song,' by Mendelssohn.

Mrs. R. Do so.

(*She plays, and Robert applauds, and her mother joins in.*)

Mr. Won't you play something, mother?

Mrs. R. What shall I play?

M. (*After a moment's thought.*) The one you
were practising the other day,
Hungarian Dances by Brahms—it's very gay.

(*Mrs. Robine goes to the piano, and Robert rises to assist her, but when he sees that she plays from memory he motions to Mary, and they begin to dance to the music.*)

R. (*After kissing her passionately, aside at a pianissimo passage.*) Ah! will you marry me, dear Mary?

M. (*Yielding to him modestly.*) I guess,
When you return from the war, dear Robert, yes!

Scene 3

(*Widow McCarthy's Kitchen.*)

Widow McCarthy (*mending*), and Johnnie
(*standing near.*)

J. C'n I go fishin', ma?

W. Mc. Av coorse yez can't!

Where wud yez go?

J. In Charlie Graham's punt,
Down on Big Pond.

W. Mc. Ye little rascal, yez,
'Twuz on'y t'uther day says Oi, Oi says,
Ye mustn't go nare th' wat'rr. Now be ye deaf?

J. But I thought, ma, that you would give me
leave,
'Cuz Charlie's careful, 'n' I'll bring home some
fish—

Enough ter fill t' the top yer big white dish.

W. Mc. Ye will, will yez? Will, Oi dunno.

Yer pa
Wuz enuff t' lose.

J. But I'll be careful, ma,
Honest, I will!

(There is a knock.)

W. Mc. Johnnie, go t' th' doorr.
(J. opens the door, and enter Mr. Saintly.)

Mr. S. How do you do?

W. Mc. *(Rising in confusion.)* Ixcuse th'
looks av th' floorr,
Plase, Mr. McSaint. Johnnie, git 'im a chair!
Mr. S. Thank you, John. Are you feeling
pretty fair?

You've plenty to keep you busy, I suppose,
W. Mc. Oi 'm faling foine, yer riv'rence. Oi
have woes,
T' be sure; 'twuz harrrd t' have me auld man die,
But it 'ud be wicked fer me t' howl an' cry,
Seein' Oi have so manny fren's, an' me b'y
Is good t' me—a rale good b'y he is,
Sure, Mr. McSaint—he niver tills no lies.

Mr. S. I believe he surely is, Mrs. McCarthy.

W. Mc. Joost now he asked t' go on a fishin'
party,—
Shud Oi lit 'im go?

Mr. S. Why not? It'll do him good.

J. Hear that, dear mama? I only wish you
could!

W. Mc. Run along, me b'y—be shoore ye
brring some fish.

*(Johnnie gets from the closet quickly a small
fishing pole and a cap and goes out happy.)*

Mr. S. How are you getting along?

W. Mc. Dey's nutt'n' Oi wish
So much as t' have me man back here wid me,
But Oi suppose it aint no use.

Mr. S. Ah, we
Should never want to bring our dead friends back.
They are better off in the other world. Alack

That we do not trust God more than we do!
He takes us in, and takes us out again too
Just as He finds it best—and He well knows.
As from an everlasting fountain flows
His love and kindness for us. He restores
Us when we are sick and sad. His spirit soars
About us all the time. Indeed, He parts
Us from our dear ones, and it hurts our hearts
At first, but then He comforts us again;
And we and life have added value, as rain
Refreshes and benefits the thirsty fields
And strengthens each little plant, so that it yields
A generous harvest, finding life a delight;
Or as the morning brings to the watcher light.

W. Mc. Shoore, an' ye've made it so beautiful
that Oi
Can't hilp—ye'll parrdin, Mr. McSaint—but cry!
(*She sobs with much feeling.*)

Mr. S. (*Patting her sympathizingly on the
shoulder.*) You had a good husband, Mrs.
McCarthy. See
What my congregation recently gave to me
For you. (*He takes a ten-dollar bill from his
pocket and gives to her.*) This may assist
you with the rent.

W. Mc. It's a koind-hearted man ye arre, dare
Mr. McSaint!

I t'ank yez koindly, an' yez people, too.

Mr. S. (*Rising to go.*) You're very welcome,
I'm sure—we feel for you.

W. Mc. Will ye answer me wan quistion afore
ye go?

Mr. S. Why yes, what is it?

W. Mc. Th' Garmin Kaiser, ye know,
Will he be after wantin' t' govern us?

Mr. S. (*Laughing.*) It does look so, but after
a little fuss

With some of our boys, I think he'll change his
mind.

Why did you ask?

W. Mc. Sure, I wuz feared dose Jews
O' Garmins wud come an' make us black der
shoes.

Me man wuz kilt in th' battle av th' Mooze,
An' afore Oi'd let th' Kaiser in dis place,
Oo'd take a rrollin' pin an' smash his face!

(*She swings her arm fiercely thru the air.*)

Mr. S. (*Laughing heartily.*) That's right, be
patriotic, Mrs. McCarthy.

I'm very glad to see you strong and hearty.

(*He goes out with a bow before she can answer.
She stands looking at the money while the curtain
drops.*)

Scene 4

(Lawn in front of the Robines' house, with a hammock and bench, or simply bench, early evening after supper in July.)

Mary *(sitting on the bench, with a letter that she has been reading in her hand.)*

Mary. My dear boy soon will be embarking
for France

To fight for our country. I wonder what his
chance

Will be for coming thru alive and strong.

I hope this terrible war will not last long!

(She shivers at the thought. Then she kisses her letter, and becomes more calm.)

Scene 5

(Same as before. Enter) Mr. Saintly.

Mr. S. *(Lifting his hat.)* Ah, Mary—just the
girl I was looking for!

(Mary hides her letter quickly, rises to greet him, then with a gesture offers him a seat on the bench beside her.)

A beautiful evening, isn't it? I adore
The Great Creator, mighty Architect
Of the Universe, for having lovingly deckt
The world. It is indeed a beautiful place—
With the love of God inscribed upon its face!

You're worried—what has been troubling you, my dear?

You look so pale; you are not well, I fear.

M. I am not ill. I was thinking of the war.

Mr. S. An awful thing to dwell on. There are more
And better subjects.

M. For instance?

Mr. S. At your age,
Ahem! why, I should think that love and marriage
Would be quite interesting.

M. (*Smiling sadly.*) Ah, that too
Was in my thoughts.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) What a lovely smile!
(*Aloud.*) So you
Were thinking of love! (*Laying aside his reserve, and taking one of Mary's hand in both of his.*)

O Mary dear, I love
You so! And you should know it.

M. (*Gently.*) Please remove
Your hands, dear Mr. Saintly—someone might
Be watching. I am engaged. It's only right
To tell you so. It has not been announced.
You see I am not free.

Mr. S. (*Draws back startled.*) I had renounced
All earthly loves, but when I met with you—
So beautiful, bright, loving, kind, and true—
I could not help—Ah, Mary, I wish you joy
In all your wedded life with your dear boy.

M. I—thank you!

Mr. S. Pray, who is your fiancé?

M. Robert Held.

Mr. S. I wish that you would say
To him that I congratulate him. (*Short pause.*)

The light

Is fading, and I must go. Good night!

Mr. (*With feeling.*)

Good night!

Exit Mr. S.

Scene 6

(*The same. Enter.*) Robert Held (*dressed in khaki.*)

R. H. You flirting with the minister? How's that?

(*Mary rises quickly and extends her arms to embrace him, without speaking.*)

R. (*Recoils from her.*) I saw him hold your hand as there you sat!

(*Pointing accusingly at the bench.*) Is not one lover enough?

M. (*Still holding out her arms lovingly.*)

I could not fight
With Mr. Saintly, for that would not be right.
I asked him to take away his hands as soon
As I could.

R. You lie! I saw him, by the moon,
Holding your hand for several minutes.

M. (*Dropping her left hand, and pointing at him proudly with her right.*) So you
Are now a spy? Is that the way you woo
Your *fiancée*? If you can't trust me now,
Before you go, or take my word, then how
Will it be when you have gone away to war?
Before our God—beneath His moon and star—
(*Pointing upward majestically to the moon, which is in the first quarter, and to the evening star near it*) I give you back your love, your letters, your ring,
(*Taking several letters from her bosom, and a diamond engagement ring, and reaching them toward him*) And I will return your presents—everything!

The engagement has not been announced, so we
From this time forth are mutually free!

R. (*Hesitating for a few moments, stupefied, then rushing to her with arms outstretched and embracing her with great passion.*) Forgive me, love, for not believing you—

When I saw you there with him, it went all thru
My heart. I believe you, Mary, that you are true.
Forgive me, please! I love you so! So much!

M. (*Surrendering completely.*) I love your
kisses, Robert—I love your touch—
You will not take the letters back—or the ring?

R. No, Mary dear, I'll not take back a thing!
(*They sit.*)

Where is the ring? I'll put it on your finger.

Hark—a whip-poor-will—what a beautiful
singer!

M. I must have dropped the ring—where has
it gone?

(*Almost crying.*) Oh, I must find it! Where is
my lovely stone?

R. Don't cry—we'll find it. I will strike a
match—

Perhaps it fell in that little uncut patch.

(*He lights a match, the flare of which illum-
inates Mary's face; and he kisses her again
instead of hunting for the ring, allowing the
match to fall; but he strikes another and an-
other then in vain search.*)

R. I'm afraid we can not find it. You had bet-
ter

Look in the morning for it. Here is a letter
You must have dropt.

(He picks up the letter and hands it to her. She kisses it and puts it back in her bosom, and sits down with Robert on the bench.)

R. *(After embracing her.)* You are a noble girl! Have you forgiven me for being a churl?

M. Of course, dear Bob. Don't speak of it.

R. *(Calmly.)* Tell me,
What did Mr. Saintly want with you?

M. Why, he—
He wanted me to marry him.

R. To marry
You?

M. That's what he said.

R. *(Eagerly.)* Tell all!

M. 'Oh Mary,'
He said, 'I love you, and you should know it.

M. 'Remove
Your hands, Mr. Saintly', I said. 'Another I love.
I am engaged, tho it has not been announced.'

R. Go on! And he?

M. He said, 'I had renounced
All earthly loves, but when I met with you—
So beautiful, bright, er—gentle, kind, and true,
I could not help—ah, Mary, I wish you joy
In all your wedded life with your dear boy.'

R. He said those words?

M. I've repeated as near as I can.

R. And I was jealous of such a noble man?
(*There is silence, and then the church bells begin to ring for evening service. They listen a while without speaking.*)

What do you say to being married tonight?

M. (*Thoughtfully, almost sadly.*) I do not think it best, sweetheart, or right.

R. (*Suspiciously.*) Why not?

M. How soon, dear Bob, must you go away?

R. Tomorrow the regiment starts. I got today, By special permission, to say goodbye to you; But I must go back tonight. I'd be in a stew If I didn't—my leave expires tomorrow at eight, And for the sake of my honor I dare not be late. My train will be here soon—at nine-thirty.

M. Thank you, dear boy, for coming to say goodbye!

I'll never forget this night so long as I live.

R. Nor I! But, Mary, sweetheart, won't you give

The reason you believe that we should not Be married now? Sain'tly can tie the knot In a minute or two.

M. He is in church, and all The other ministers as well.

R. We'll call Upon the justice.

M. Have you the license, dear?

R. What a fool I am!

M. Besides, I fear,
Even if we were married properly,
The people would say it was done improperly.

R. What diff'rence would that make? Who
cares for opinion?

M. Do you remember 'The bird with a broken
pinion
Can never soar so high again'? It is
Our duty to think of our reputation. The lies
And slander people scatter is plenty without
Our giving them more details to gossip about.

R. What do you mean? What gossip would
there be?

M. (*Putting her hand on his arm.*) Dear
Robert, the people would whisper around
that we
Were forced to do it.

R. I don't quite understand.

M. If you were a woman you would. My sex
was planned
By God to long for children, and all they think
About is that or something related. No ink
Is black enough to paint their venom. Their
weakness
Is jealousy. What seems to be a meekness
With them is only a base hypocrisy—
No woman was ever meek. Sincerity

They never knew. They do not even know
Themselves. Their chief delight is hurting so
Somebody else—especially another
Woman, or else a man they hate—mother
Or daughter, sister or friend—it's all the same
With them—that she can never recover. Their
flame
Of jealous hate—insatiable almost—
Could never be extinguished by a host
Of angels armed with fire-extinguishers.
Women are reputation-ravishers—
From the worst up to the best. When people
marry
In haste, they say—

(She stops, embarrassed.)

R. What do they say, dear Mary?

M. That they were forced to do it because the
girl

Was pregnant.

R. My God! if they sullied my sweet pearl—
Her name, I mean—I'd kill the whole damned
lot!

(Instead of taking it seriously, Mary laughs.)

(Angrily.) You laugh?

M. *(More soberly.)* Excuse me for laughing.

You could not
Exterminate 'the whole damned lot'! 'T would
take

Forever and a day, and longer—stake
Your honor on it! Ha ha! You do not know
How many they are, my gallant boy, ho ho!

R. (*Appeased.*) But you (*looking at her in wonder*) would never do like that, my dear?

M. I pray to God continually to be near
And keep me from doing evil. Most of my sex
Are not so really religious—much is pretext
With women, I am ashamed to say. An honest
Female is almost never found. At best
They are a deceitful lot.

R. How about your mother?

M. I think that we had better find another
Subject, don't you, dear? (*Starting*) What's
that, the train?

R. (*Excitedly.*) Ha, I must run! (*He kisses
and embraces her hurriedly.*) May, not a
single stain

Shall touch your honor. Write often, dear,—
goodby!

M. Goodby, sweetheart!

(*Robert starts off on a run. She stands a while
trying to follow him with her eyes, then sinks
upon the bench and weeps.*)

What a poor, weak girl am I!

ACT III

Scene I

(Kitchen in the Robines' house, with a range to the left, wall china-closet in the background, table a little to the right of the center, two or three chairs, and whatever else may be desired. Two doors, preferably at left and right corners, back.)

Mabelle *(making bread at the table.)*

M. Ya loo! ya la! I wonder if John will come Tonight? Ya loo! I'd better stay at home, So's not to miss him if he does. Ya loo!

Ya la! I've kneaded that enough. *(She hears a knock.)* Now who

Is that? Come in! *(With a black shawl and black bonnet, enter from the left Widow McCarthy, followed by Johnnie carrying an empty clothes-basket.)*

W. Mc. *(Seating herself heavily.)* Hullo, Mabelle! How is Yersilf t'day?

M. *(Kneading some more.)* Well. How are you?

W. Mc. Now yez Kin bit Oi 'm falin' foine as silk, me darlint. 'Twuz on'y yistud'y me brudder sint— Me brudder Moike,' ye know, that's wurrkin down

On th' raleroad bein' built nare Wilmin'town—

He sint me fifty dollars. Mabelle—phwot
D'ye t'ink av thot! (*She slaps both hands down
on her knees excitedly, then settles back and
leers at Mabelle.*)

M. (*Stopping her work and holding up her
hands.*)

Fifty! That is a lot,
Sure thing. (*Sighing*) I wish I had a brother.
(*Goes on slowly with her work.*)

W. Mc. Y' aint
In need av a brudder—ye've got John Reid.
(*Turning to Johnnie, who has been fidgeting
near her still holding the basket.*) Now haint
Ye anny rist in yez? Ye make me narvous.
Sit down an' be shtill. W'ere is he now? (*To
Mabelle.*)

M. In Jarvis—
At least, he was. He may be here tonight.

W. Mc. O blissed Mary! Mabelle, dare, thot's
right—
Inj'y jersilf whoile young. Ye niver know
Whin yez'll meet a catastroph er so,
Loike me, a pore, lone widder! Phwot fun is
thot?

M. (*Cutting the dough up and putting it care-
fully in several bread-pans.*) I guess there
isn't any.

No, there's not!

(*To Johnnie suddenly*) Run out, me b'y, an' play in th' yard, in th' shade.

(*Leaning forward*) Did ye hear, begorra, phwot
Doctor Baykin said

About auld maids?

M. (*Stopping again.*) No, tell me.

W. Mc. Will, indade,

He said as ther' war noine vay-rye-us stages
Thot auld maids go thru in th'r diff'rent ages.

M. (*Much interested.*) What are they, Mrs. McCarthy?

W. Mc.

Th' foist is dis:

Whin th' noice takes her fr'm th' doctor man t'
kiss

Her on th' buttocks an' examine her little parts;
Dey love her thin, becace she fills ther' hearts
Wid joy an' satisfacshun. Thin th' nixt
Is whin she gits t' be aroun' near six t'
Twilve! she plays wid de b'ys an' goils t'gither,
An' toins up her nose t' some, falin' she's bitter
Dan dey; an' she does lots av naughtiniss
On th' soide, but none sushpicts it niverth'liss,
Becace she is a goil. Th' thoid is whin
She is in pubbe'ty; she's bashful thin,

Becase av her swillin' brists an' nastybayshun;
 An' is sure she is th' most iligant creashun!
 She tells her mither she does not loike th' b'ys,
 But annyone shud know dey all are lies—
 Dat's all she t'inks av, drames av, day an' noight;
 She t'inks she's smarrrt, but she is far fr'm broight.
 The fourt' stage foinds her quoite a little leddy,
 An' joost fur fun she goes aroun' wid Eddy,
 An' lits 'im spind his cash, but all th' toime
 She t'inks no more of Eddy dan a doime,
 But wonders whin her wealt'y prince will come
 To marry her an' give her a stoylish home;
 She buys a lot av clo'es, and looks more swill
 Dan anny fallin angil come fr'm Hill!
 She t'inks in th' fift' stage still more av her silf,
 An' looks f'r a king to take her frum th' shilf
 An' make her a quane, an' bring a coach an' four,
 Or a Packard Sixty-twin, wid vilvits galore,
 Chauffers, butlers, soivants, cat'rrers, tailors,
 Coortiers, aut'ors, ministers, wealt'y sailors—
 Moichants, I mane, t' wait on 'er an' say
 She is th' greatest 'ooman av anny day;
 An' she toins up 'er nose at common rispictable
 min,
 Loike me auld man, an' tosses up 'er chin.
 Th' sixt' is whin she gits a little gray;
 She looks t' God t' come an' take 'er away

An' make 'er Goddess av Hivin! so she k'n look
down

On iverybody ilse thot is aroun'.

The siv'nt' foinds her auld an' cauld an' t'in,

An' tarribly jallus av iverybody thin,

Ispicially th' married 'oomin, who git

Th' pleasure the'r husban's give 'em—ev'ry whit

The on'y t'ing in loife thot's good,—Oi mane,

It is th' bisht! Thin comes the eight', in which

She does herr scanty hair up wid a switch,

An' ogles at th' min, an' hopes an' prays

Thot some strong man will come an' kiss 'er face

An' marry her an' do th' rist,—joost who,

She cares not—anny good strong man'll do!

Th' lasht an' noint' stage foinds her widout teet',

Onliss ther' false, an' it's harrd f'r her t' eat;

She's deaf, an' lame, an' weak; but shtill at noight

She peerrs benaith th' bid—not out av froight,

But forr t' foind a man, an' thot is rroight!

*(Mabelle laughs boisterously, while Widow
Mc. C. shakes with silent laughter, and holds
her sides.)*

W. Mc. *(Going to the left door)* Where be
ye Johnnie? Come in an' git th' clo'es!

(Returning to her chair) It's a wonder Mis'
Robine didn't put her nose

In th' doorr t' see phwot we war laffin' about.

M. It is no wonder—Mis' Robine is out!

W. Mc. It's joost as will. Now we kin take
our aise,

An' have a good toime indade, joost as we please.

Scene 2

Mrs. Robine (*Sitting in her sitting-room alone.*) I can not read, I can not play—I have
No pleasure or rest in anything. I behave
So queerly! I wonder what is the matter with me?
I hope I'm not sick. My food sits heavily,
And I confess I have no appetite.
I'm sleepy by day, but can not sleep at night.
Oh, Harry was a faithful husband. I
Did not appreciate him fully. Why,
I know not, except perhaps because I had him
All to myself. Why should I have a mad whim
Once in a while to cross him as I did?
I could have seen that he was better fed,
That is, more regularly—he got enough,
To be sure—no wonder he was sometimes gruff!
He stood my humors like an angel. If he
Had got real angry—*real* angry, and beaten me,
I would have appreciated him more. He was
Too good to me, I'm sure. I wish the laws
Would let a husband beat his wife a bit—
That's what the women need, I'm sure of it.

D' you think—that I—will ever marry again?
It's possible—there are a lot of men
Who love me—crazy over me—ah, but
The one I want does not propose. I'll shut
The doors—somebody might be listening,
And I like to think aloud.

(She gets up and closes both doors carefully.)

The fastening

On this is poor—I'll have to have a man
Come fix it. *(She sits down again.)* Oh, why is
it a woman can

Not tell the man she loves how crazy she is
About him! It's hard to be a widow. Kiss—
Embrace—all is denied to me, alas!

And I grow older as the long years pass—
Farther from marriage, because of being less
Attractive. I'm still pretty, nevertheless,
And maybe Mr. Saintly will propose—
If, like mine, his affection grows and grows!

*(At this point the door opens, and the spirit of
her husband enters silently, so that she does
not observe it, and passes sadly around be-
hind her to the other side of the table from
her and stops, waiting for her to look up.)*

(Screams.) Mercy! Oh Heavens! My God—
it's Harry!

(The apparition vanishes without moving.)

Enter Mary

Mary.

What is

The matter, mother?

Mrs. R. *(Collecting herself.)* One of my vagaries,

That's all, my child. Don't worry. I thought I'd try A little acting. You heard me scream? That's why.

Exit Mary.

Scene 3 (As before)

Enter Mabelle.

Mabelle. The Reverend Mr. Saintly, ma'am, is here,

And would like to see you.

Mrs. R. *(Graciously.)* Show him in, my dear.

Exit Mabelle.

How strange! 'Twas Harry himself! Can spirits come

To earth again and visit their former home?

It seems impossible. Yet I have heard—

Enter Mr. Saintly.

Mrs. R. How glad I am to see you! I was stirred

By a very strange event a moment ago.

Please make yourself at home. Should you care to know

What it was that happened?

Mr. S. (*After seating himself comfortably.*)

By all means, yes. Did you

Cry out?

Mrs. R. It must have been Mabelle, the maid—
She screams sometimes at little things, afraid
Of bugs, and snakes.

Mr. S. Ah, yes, of course. You said
That you were startled?

Mrs. R. I said I was *stirred*, instead
Yes, greatly stirred. I saw my husband's spirit.

Mr. S. Your husband's spirit?

Mrs. R. Yes, or very near it.

Mr. S. That is remarkable!

Mrs. R. Is it possible,
You think, Mr. Saintly?

Mr. S. Surely. It's plausible—
Why not? Because the sceptics sneer and doubt
Does not affect the truth of it. Without
A question, spirits have been seen by many—
And in this village.

Mrs. R. Have you heard of any
Here?

S. Yes, four. How did your husband appear?

Mrs. R. (*Trembling.*) Why, I looked up, and
there he was.

Mr. S. Quite near?

Mrs. R. (*Pointing*) Right there.

Mr. S. You recognized him?

Mrs. R. 'Twas no one else.

Mr. S. And then you screamed?

Mrs. R. (*Severely*) I said it was Mabelle's
You heard, if any.

Mr. S. Ah, yes, I beg your pardon.
It must have been her I heard out by the garden,
Of course. And had you been worrying—I mean,
Thinking of him?

Mrs. R. (*Coyly*) Oh Mr. Saintly, I've seen
The times when I thought about Harry more.

Mr. S. (*Meaningly*) He had
A message for you. I hope it was not bad.
What did he say?

Mrs. R. He simply looked at me.

Mr. S. That was enough, Mrs. Robine. Ah,
surely
You ought to ponder over it, to see
What thing your husband meant. It might well
be
Of great importance to you.

Mrs. R. Mr. Saintly, I will.

Mr. S. Our duties, you know, are the first
things to fulfill.

Mrs. R. (*With an enticing smile.*) It's very
warm in here now. Won't you come
Out on the lawn?

Mr. S. Why, yes.

Mrs. R. (*Meaningly*) And feel at home.

Exeunt

Scene 4

The Robines' Lawn.

Enter Mrs. Robine and Mr. Saintly from the house.

Mrs. R. (*Motioning to the bench, which is under a tree.*) That is a cool spot—let us sit down there.

Mr. S. I see but one seat—I'll go and get a chair.

Mrs. R. I'm sure there's room enough on it for two.

(*Mr. S. without replying goes into the house, to the evident disappointment of Mrs. R., and brings out a chair, which he gives to her, and sits on the bench.*)

Mr. S. (*Dryly*) This is better.

Mrs. R. The maid could have brought it for you.

Mr. S. I am not helpless. What is ailing Mary?

Mrs. R. (*Startled*) Why do you ask?

Mr. S. She used to be so merry

And happy, but now so different. I met

Her in the hall when I went in to get

The chair. She was crying, and hardly spoke to me.

Mrs. R. You know that women feel at times
less cheery
And gay than at others. Now no doubt—

Mr. S. (*Interrupting*) I know,
I know; but that does not account for a so
Great change in her. She is another girl
From what she was. It hurts me to see it.

Mrs. R. A whirl
Of love, especially when the lover's away,
Is often known to injure one.

Mr. S. (*Glancing at her sharply*) You say
The truth, indeed. (*Sighs.*) I truly hope this
mood

Will not last long. If I were you I would
Invite some young folks of the town—her age—
And give her parties.

Mrs. R. She will not have them. She stays
By herself a lot, and will not even talk
To me sometimes. She goes to her room to lock
Herself in there alone. I hardly know
How best to treat her.

Mr. S. Speak to Doctor Low—

Mrs. R. I did. He said 'twas love and worry,
and that
No medicine could help her.

Mr. S. (*Distracted*) My hat, my hat—
(*Looks around for his hat*) Where is my hat?

And will no admonition
Affect her?

Mrs. R. Useless. She's full of premonition—
Talks of death—

Mr. S. (*Aside*) How psychic these people are!
(*Aloud*) I'll see the doctor. Perhaps with excellent care—

(*Rises to go*)

Mrs. R. (*Rising too*) Before you go, won't
you come 'round and see
Some gladiolus that came from Italy?

Exeunt

Scene 5
The Robines' Sitting-Room
Enter Mary

Mary. Where shall I go? I love the quiet, yet
still

When I am alone I feel a deathly chill
Run thru my heart. Why should I want to avoid
All company? Alas, the world is void—
A failure, life, and death, a misery!
How many have suffered before me! History
Is full of unhappy lovers. Where is that play—
'Francesca da Rimini'? Was it taken away?

(*She searches for it, first on the table, then in
the bookcase.*)

Mother perhaps was reading it. Ah, here
It is! I'll sit and finish it. O dear
Francesca! You attained a noble fame,
But who will ever hear of my poor name?

(She sits, and reads for a few moments; but then looks up meditatively and sadly. As she looks across the room a vision appears, lighter and brighter than its surroundings. A young soldier—plainly Robert Held—lies wounded near the edge of a shell-crater. He tries to sit up, but is unable. He puts his hand to an inner pocket and draws forth painfully a letter, which he kisses. A convulsion overtakes him, and he dies, with the letter still in his hand.)

Oh help! It's Robert! Help! *(She lets fall the book, and almost collapses in her chair, pallid and trembling.)*

Enter in alarm Mr. Saintly and Mrs. Robine.

Both *(Together)* Why did you scream?

M. You would have screamed if you had had
the dream

I had.

Both. A dream?

M. It was an apotheosis

Of Robert!

Both. Robert?

Mr. S. (*Aside, sadly*) A hard attack of neurosis,
I fear—these visions often occur in such
A state. It portends no good. (*Aloud*) Mary,
how much
Have you been sleeping lately?

M. I am not ill.
Don't worry about me, please, folks. Now I will,
If you'll excuse me, go on reading.

(*She picks up the fallen book, and reads, ignoring her mother and the minister, who glance at one another comprehensively.*)

Exeunt all but Mary.

M. (*Allowing the book to drop into her lap*)
Yes,
If a confession is good for the soul, I must confess
I almost love that minister! I long
To confide in him, but fear it would be wrong
I must be faithful to Robert. Temptations lose
Their pow'r o'er us when we avoid them and
choose
To be strong. (*She prays*) O God, I ask Thee,
give me strength,
And may I feel thy Spirit near, at length!

ACT IV

(*Two months later*)

Scene I

(*Widow McCarthy's Kitchen.*)

Widow McCarthy (*peeling potatoes.*)

W. Mc. Th' prroice av iv'ryt'ing is goin' oop—
How kin we live? Arrah! Soon a coop
Av tay will cosht as much as an oi'dinary
Male before. Bejabers, it's wickud! Vary
Will, if it's forr th' country's honor; if not,
Th' divil wid it! Some rich min make a lot
Av money, whoile we poor people have t' give
Not only our iv'ry cint t' eat an' live,
But husban's, too. Oi don't t'ink it's rroight!
Oi wud—if dey'd on'y give me a chancet—Oi'd
frroight

Th' vary loife out on 'em! Dey wudn't grin
An' chuckle at us poor divils—Oi'd shtick it in
To 'em until dey hollered—I wud!

(*She swings her knife fiercely around in the air,
and then goes on peeling fast.*)

Enter Johnnie (excited.)

J. O ma,
Miss Robine's coming with her mother!

W. Mc. (*Dropping both knife and potato*) La,
Be ye tillin' me th' trut'?

J. (*Stoutly, shutting the door hard*) Of course I am.

W. Mc. Behave yersilf, an' don't lit th' doorre slam!

Pick up dose t'ings (*pointing to some clothes.*)

(*She puts the peelings in the stove, and the whole potatoes in the closet, leaving out what she had cut, a very few, and taking a broom begins to sweep easily. There comes a knock.*) Johnnie, see who it is.

Scene 2 (*Same*)

Enter Mrs. and Mary Robine.

W. Mc. (*Leaning the broom against the wall and going to greet the visitors with a great bustle*)

Augh, Mrs. Robine! It is an honor yiz

Is payin' me. Johnnie, git a chair.

Be quick about it. An' how's Miss Mary? Dere, Sit down and rist a bit—ye must be toired.

It's warm f'r October. Oi see yiz be poispoired!

Mrs. R. Thank you, I won't sit down. (*She looks around haughtily and contemptuously.*)

I see you're poor.

(*Mary is about to take the chair offered politely by Johnnie, but on hearing her mother's refusal declines with a grateful gesture.*)

W. Mc. Will, Oi don't have much money, thot
is shoorre,
But shtill der's diff'rent koinds av poverrrty:
Oi have me son, an' he's a vary good b'y.

Mrs. R. (*Scanning Johnnie with a sneer*)

He's a dirty boy. He ought to wash himself
more;

And a little water wouldn't hurt your floor.

(*She lifts her skirts up a little.*)

W. Mc. (*Embarrassed*) Ah will, it's pooty
clane, considerin'.

Oi aint much av a hand at putterin'

Aroun' all day at th' floore. Indade, Oi have
Enuff t' do besoides. Oi aint no slave.

M. I've seen the dirt in our own kitchen worse on
The floor.

Mrs. R. What a thing to say before a person
Like Mrs. McCarthy!

M. (*Wearily*) All right, ma—it is true.

Mrs. R. (*Stiffening up*) To change the subject,
Mary said that you

Needed assistance. (*Takes money out of her hand
—and hands it to W. Mc. with a grand air*)

Here is a two-dollar bill.

(*W. Mc. hesitates at first to take it, but on look-
ing at Mary's face she yields and accepts.*)

Now spend it carefully.

W. Mc. T'ank yez—Oi will.

Mrs. R. Hadn't we better be going, Mary?

M. Yes,

If you say so, mother. (*To W. Mc.*) Could you make over a dress

For yourself? I have a few that I shall not Put on again.

W. Mc. (*Gratefully*) Shoore, I cud.

Mrs. R. (*Opens the door to go out. Complainingly.*) How hot

It is outside! Come, Mary.

M. Be patient, mother.

(*She pats Johnnie on the head lovingly.*)

Goodby. I wish I had a little brother

Like Johnnie, Mrs. McCarthy. I'll come again

Next week, if walking isn't too much of a strain On me.

Mrs. R. (*Sharply*) Come, Mary, come! It looks like rain.

Exeunt Mrs. R. and Mary

W. Mc. Poor Mary don't look will at all, indade!

How poor an' thin she is! Augh! Oi'm afraid Der's sumt'ing wrrong wid her. Did ye see it, b'y?

J. I didn't, ma—she looked very beautiful To me.

W. Mc. Ah, she is thot, an' dootiful,

Joost loike an angel. Der's hivin in 'er eye,
But it looks loike dith! Oh, Johnnie, it makes me
cry!

(*She weeps, and wipes her face on her dress.*)
(*Crossly, of a sudden*) Johnnie, git me dose pota-
toes out—

An' quit yer cryin', er I will t'row yez out!

Scene 3

The Robines' Lawn

Enter Mr. Saintly from the house.

Mr. S. Mary not in? That's strange. I can't
believe it.

I'll write a letter—she will have to receive it.

No, I'll not. Letters are nuisances,

Likely to stir up many disturbances.

Something is worrying Mary—there is no doubt

Of it; and I would like to help her, without

Annoying her. I love her more than ever,

Dear, pure, and honest girl! No, I must never

Refer to my love for her again. It would

Be only dangerous to both; and should

Some of these terrible gossips learn of it,

My name would not be worth a cherry-pit.

What clacking of tongues! What horribly evil
talk!

What fiends for ruining reputations! To balk

These female furies that pose as model Christians
Is absolutely impossible. Like cisterns
Seemingly pure but full of typhus germ,
Destructive bacilli of every form,
Decaying sewerage, eggs of the rectal worm,
Dead frogs and cats, putrefying snakes
And the filthiest bugs the great Creator makes—
They are; their tongue, their mind, their very soul
Appear to me all rotten, stinking, foul!
They would not be so bad if it were not
For the cunning deception they practise. Ah me!
this lot

Of being a minister is not what one
Still uninitiated would think. A gun
With magazine full in the hands of a fiendish man
Could not do half the damage a woman can
With only her tongue—that thin and waspish
member

That stings and poisons, loving to dismember,
Sicken, kill, and destroy. O sinister
And devilish woman! How can a minister—
A poor, weak minister, prevent your evil?
It takes a god to overpower a devil.
I love this spot—where I sat with dearest Mary,
And told her of my love. It is a very
Celestial and sacred precinct to me now.
I hate to leave it. Mary, Mary, how

I love thee! and how I'd like to help! But my
hands
Are tied as if by superhuman bands.

Exit slowly with head bowed.

Scene 4 (Same)

Enter Mary from the house.

*(She has some sewing in her hands, and walks
almost unsteadily to the bench, where she sits.)*

M. *(Gazing around at the trees and sky.)*

Oh, it is nice to be out! The trees and sky
Smile down upon me all so lovingly!
Heaven's caresses are near, surrounding me—
Touching, caressing—that I can plainly see.
My understanding is dull. I wish I knew
As much as Mr. Saintly. But he may, too,
Feel just the same as I. Each human being
Can go so far in comprehending and seeing
As the nature of each allows. No one can be
Omniscient in this world—'tis vanity
To make the claim. Oh, in a little while
I may be allowed to see my sweetheart's smile—
I hear him calling me. His loving voice
Rises in triumph above the dreadful noise
Of battle—above man's jealous, tumultuous strife.
Ah, would that people loved more in this life,
And hated less! God wants us all to love
Each other, but hateful, jealous thoughts remove:

That is the greatest message His prophets can
Proclaim—in the present, past or future—to man.
What could be greater? I do not mean so much
The love of sex, but love of spirit, whose touch
Alone can uplift men and women from
The degrading influences of the womb
Of hot desire. I must confess I too
Have felt the pricks of passionate heat; but thru
The spirit's will I've tried to make them slaves.
Why be a slave to sexual passion?

Enter Mrs. Robine unseen by Mary

Mrs. Robine (*Jealously, aside*) She raves!

Exit

Mary. (*Turning around*) Was someone here?

Alas, I thot I felt

An evil spirit near. (*Takes up her sewing.*) My
heart will melt

Beneath this awful pressure—this heavy load
I bear. I can't endure it long. My God,
Relieve me soon!

(*She sighs, and leans forward heavily, but forces
herself upright and tries to sew.*)

My sex, my sex, when wilt
Thou truly perceive and conquer thy great guilt?
To bury thy soul in lust, and yet pretend
With impious hypocrisy to bend

Before the God thou heedest not? Thyself—
Thy passions, pride, vanity, power, and pelf—
That is the Deity thou worshipest!
And who but a woman herself can see it best?
But this will never do: I must not rail—
Rather, control myself.

(Hearing the sound of steps coming from the road, she looks up, much startled.)

What's this, the mail?

Enter Postman.

Postman. *(Holding out a letter)* It's the mail,
Miss Mary. I hope it's something good.

M. *(Catching at her heart as she takes it)* I
hope so, too. Thank you, Mr. Wood.

Exit Postman.

(Mary examines the letter with poorly controlled excitement.)

From the French Department of War! What does
it mean?

It must be Robert's death that I have seen.

Why hesitate? *(She opens it, and reads)* "We
beg to notify

That Robert Held, your fiancé, did die

On the battle-field September twentieth.

Brave and courageous, he died a hero's death."

(She lets the letter fall, then rises and extends both arms out tragically, as if for an embrace.)

Dear Robert, 'twas you who came to me last night
To call me to you! Dear boy, I come. The light
Of earth is growing dim, but the light of heaven
Grows brighter—nearer—thank God, my prayer
is given! (*She dies.*)

Scene 5

The Cemetery.

In about the center of the scene there is a new grave, very recently covered with turf and flowers, with a wreath at the head, but no stone.

*Enter Widow McCarthy and Johnnie
(Both have their hands full of wild flowers that
grow in October, such as asters, etc., and
Johnnie has in addition a small American
flag.)*

W. Mc. Sure, dis is Mary's grave, Johnnie b'y.
J. But I don't see any name.

W. Mc.
Oi know it's hers.

Thot is joost why

(They both kneel down and try to arrange their flowers without covering those already placed.)

Why did ye have t' die,
Dare Mary? (*She bursts out crying, and rocks
back and forth on her knees. Johnnie begins
to cry, and she turns on him fiercely.*) Cryin'
be ye? F'rr shame! Yez twilf

Yares auld, an' aint got anny c'ntrol av yersilf?
Come, be a man—yer mither's depindin' on yez.
Oh, Mary—ye looked loike dith—that's phwot
Oi sez—

Now did't Oi, Johnnie? Oi noo ye wuzn't will,
But dis is tirrible! Ye' be here shtill,
If it wuzn't f'r dat dommed warr an' th' doi'ty
kaiser!

If he wuz here, Oi'd make 'im soi'tin'ly woiser
Dan he has been! (*Shakes her fist in the air.*)

Enter Mr. Saintly.

Mr. S. (*Laying his hand in a kindly manner
upon her shoulder*) What's the matter, Mrs.
McCarthy?

Why so excited? This is too wild a party
For a quiet cemetery. Respect the dead.

W. Mc. (*Crying again*) It's grreat r'spict Oi
have f'r 'em, indade,
Yer riv'rince! Thot's why Oi came wid Johnnie
here,

T' dicorate th' poor goi'l's grave. Sincere
Oi am, dare Mr. McSaint. Ixcuse me, plase.

Mr. S. You're pardoned, Mrs. McCarthy. I know your ways.

Were you trying to frighten off an evil spirit?
There is none in existence, so do not fear it.

W. Mc. Oi wuz shakin' me fisht at th' Garmin
divil

Thot caushed th' warr thot killed poor Mary.

Mr. S. Evil

Enough; but he is getting his deserts—
And will in the future with all the other perverts
Of his low type. But we ought not to judge,
For God does that.

W. Mc. We shudn't, yez sayin'? Fudge!
Parrdin me again—Oi wuz vary ixcoited.

Mr. S. I don't blame you. A man who has
exploited

So many people as William the German king
Does not deserve much credit—or anything
That's good. It's hard to say, but it is true.
You came here thru love for Mary, didn't you?

W. Mc. We did. She wuz th' darest goi'l thot
iverr

Lived on airth, an' Oi'm ixpictin' niverr
T' see her loikes agin.

Mr. S. Lovely she was,
As you say truly, Mrs. McCarthy. Good cause
You have to say it. She was good to you.

(He wipes his eyes with his handkerchief, and Mrs. McCarthy and Johnnie cry.)

J. C'n I put this flag on her grave, Mr. Saintly, too?

She wasn't a soldier, but—

Mr. S. I know what you mean,
My boy. Yes, if you like. I've never seen
A more patriotic boy. Yes, why not have
The Stars and Stripes fluttering o'er her grave?

(Johnnie puts on the flag very lovingly.)

But I beseech you, to not come to mourn
At Mary's grave, and do not feel forlorn
Because she's dead. The body may be here,—
What of it? Her soul's in another atmosphere
More beautiful than this, where jealousy,
Hard physical suffering and poverty,
Hatred, passion, unrequited love
Do not exist, and therefore can not move
The spirit basely. But when we suffer, they
Do suffer with us, and we hurt them.

W. Mc. Oh, prray,
Dare Mr. McSaint, an' loud so Mary kin hear it—
If not her body, at laisht her darrlin' shpirrit!

(Mr. Saintly kneels reverently at the side of the grave opposite them and prays.)

Mr. S. O God, be with us now, and fill our
heart

With sense of duty, that we may do our part
To make the world a very beautiful place.
Oh turn to us, Almighty God, Thy face
And let it shine on us. Give us Thy blessing,
For we Thy children humbly are confessing
Thee. Be near to Mary and bless her soul,
And comfort those who miss her—bless them all.
We pray, dear Lord, that wars will sometime
cease,
And that the world will learn to live in peace!

Curtain falls while they are kneeling.



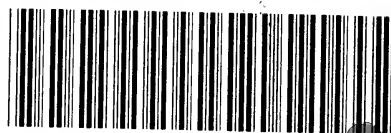
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

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